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SUBJECT: A/S FRIED'S MEETINGS WITH TURKISH MFA U/S TUYGAN
AND DU/S UZUMCU

Classified By: Ambassador Ross Wilson, Reasons 1.4 (b), (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) A/S Daniel Fried, accompanied by Special Negotiator Steven Mann and EUR/NCE Director Elizabeth Rood, discussed Nagorno-Karabakh, the Armenian genocide resolution, Cyprus, Iran and the Balkans with MFA Undersecretary Ali Tuygan and Deputy Undersecretary Ahmet Uzumcu on March 16. Fried said the Administration's position on the genocide resolution has not changed and urged Turkey to consider ways it can contribute to a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. There was some discussion of FM Gul's visit to Washington, which was subsequently canceled. Tuygan assured Fried of Turkey's willingness to move forward constructively on Cyprus. Turkish officials stressed Turkey could not be as publicly critical of neighboring Iran as we would like, but promised to keep sending tough private messages to Tehran and avoid high-level exchanges. Fried stressed the need for Kosovo final status this year, and Turkish officials expressed confidence the region could handle Kosovo independence. Detailed discussions on Nagorno-Karabakh, Turkey-Armenia relations and energy covered septels. End Summary.

Nagorno-Karabakh

¶2. (S) A/S Fried and Ambassador Mann requested Turkey consider seriously how it might support an eventual Nagorno-Karabakh settlement. Both Tuygan and Uzumcu stated that Turkey considers opening the Turkish-Armenian border and normalizing diplomatic relations a bilateral issue and does not want those steps integrally linked to an N-K deal. However, Uzumcu asserted, a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement will have a positive impact on normalizing relations with Armenia and vice versa. Tuygan said he hoped the two tracks - N-K and Turkey's bilateral relations with Armenia - could run simultaneously. Uzumcu said a senior Armenian official had

told him recently in Vienna that he thought Turkey, Armenia, and Azerbaijan should all be in the same alliance. Uzumcu said he took this as an encouraging statement indicating Armenia will "turn to the West" as regional problems are solved.

Armenian Genocide Resolution

13. (C) Tuygan stressed the importance of no Congressional action on the Armenian genocide resolution. Fried responded that, while he could not speak for the President, he would recommend that we follow the same line as we have in the past. In discussions with Congress, he could urge that whatever Members' concerns on other issues, they not make an historical decision based on current concerns. An historians' commission could be very useful. The truth and reconciliation commission, though controversial, had done a good, serious study, which the USG supported.

Responding to Turkey's Critics

14. (C) Discussion of FM Gul's visit to the U.S. was overtaken by his subsequent cancellation following surgery on March 20.

Fried stressed that the Secretary still wants to come to Turkey. There are many issues that need to be discussed. These included concerns arising from Turkey's reception of Hamas, as well as issues associated with the movie "Valley of the Wolves - Iraq". Movies are movies, but when senior Turks attend a gala opening and appear to endorse the film, it is inflammatory. There is, he added, considerable concern,

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including among traditional friends of Turkey. Fence-mending would be helpful. It would also be useful for Gul to tell people that the Turks received Hamas, delivered a strong message and are disappointed that Hamas hasn't yet responded well.

15. (C) Tuygan responded that the GoT understood we were not comfortable with the visit. However, viewed in the broader context of the region in which Turkey lives and the enormous potential for continued conflict, be it in the Middle East, Iraq, the looming crisis with Iran, Afghanistan, or Sudan, Turkey sees a looming clash of civilizations. It feels the urgency of preventing that clash by doing what it can to counsel moderation. If the negative trends continue, Tuygan said, the GoT is worried about Turkey's position in this "clash"; in particular, whether Turkey will be where it wants to be or where others put it. It may, too, be a bit early to pass final judgment on Hamas. They will have to sit down, perhaps with Fatah, and decide which course they will follow. Now is the time to reserve judgment; Turkey will speak out when the time is right.

Cyprus

16. (C) Tuygan summarized the GoT's recent efforts on Cyprus. Turkey has tried hard. All it hears in response is that the Greek Cypriots are a member of the EU and Turkey must live up to its obligations to open its ports and airports. We need, he stressed, to work together to avoid deadlock, which could come by late summer/early fall. The GoT is willing to work on ideas. It is hard to understand what is wrong with the essence of FM Gul's January 24 proposal in which, tacitly, the reciprocal opening of Turkish and Turkish Cypriot ports and airports - either of which, on its own, could be construed as moving toward recognition - would not imply recognition.

17. (C) Fried noted his appreciation for the GoT's desire to

work on different approaches. Of course, Turkey must meet its obligations to the EU, but we need to work together to help find ways to make it possible, taking advantage especially of pro-settlement forces in the north. The USG internal redlines continue to be that any settlement for reunification must be a bizonal, bicomunal federation. We are familiar with GOC President Papadapolous' style. Tuygan (please protect), stated firmly, but off the record, that, even with respect to Cyprus, Turkey could not play the rabbit while the lion of Iran was out there.

Iran

18. (C) On Iran, Fried emphasized that the USG truly believes the diplomatic approach can work. We are not just going through the motions, he stressed. We hear that support for Ahmedi-nejad is not broad. Their loud protests about the UNSC referral indicate their strong desire not to be isolated. We must pursue the diplomatic path and, at the same time, continue our efforts to reach out to Iranian society, not the regime. We completely reject the notion of clash of civilizations. The very fact of Turkey's existence as a democratic, secular Muslim countries belies the premise of a clash of civilizations - it is a false choice. This is why, Tuygan responded, Turkey is doing its best to be helpful in Iraq and to counsel moderation to Iran, telling Tehran that the only way out is full transparency and cooperation with the IAEA and the EU-3.

19. (C) Fried urged that the international community remain strong and united, speaking in a single voice. If we are united, our chances of success rise fast. Turkey can play a critical role if Iran hears a clear message from its

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neighbor. Tuygan responded that the chairman of Iran's foreign relations committee in the Majlis had just been in Ankara and had heard that message loud and clear, both in person and through the press.

110. (C) In a subsequent meeting, Fried told D/US Uzumcu that the Secretary was looking forward to further discussions on Iran with Turkey. In his view, the Iranians are isolated and referral to the Security Council did matter to Tehran, despite Iranian protestations to the contrary. Fried said Turkey had an important role to play in being clear with Tehran about its nuclear ambitions, while reaching out to the Iranian people and showing them Turkey's example. Meanwhile, the U.S. and Turkey should stay in close touch about the way forward. Ambassador Wilson added that the U.S. and Turkey need to stay in synch on high-level exchanges with Tehran, continue to cooperate on stopping technology transfer to Iran, and noted that NEA DAS Gordon Gray will visit Ankara March 21-23 to discuss Iran policy in more detail.

111. (C) Uzumcu expressed concerns about possible sanctions against Iran, voicing skepticism concerning their effectiveness and fears about a negative effect on Turkey's economy. He stated that, as a neighbor, Turkey will not be as publicly critical of Iran as the U.S. might prefer, but assured A/S Fried that Turkey will be "tough and blunt" in its private messages to Tehran. He also said that Turkey would avoid high-level official exchanges with Iran. Turkey will look forward to hearing our specific ideas on possible sanctions as the process moves forward, he added.

Balkans

112. (C) In his meeting with Uzumcu, Fried noted U.S. determination to come to closure on Kosovo final status this year and stressed that, despite Russian President Putin's claims, Kosovo does not represent a precedent for other

conflicts. Fried stressed that further delay on status is not an option, nor is return to the 1999 situation. The U.S. is working with Belgrade as well as its neighbors Albania and Macedonia, while stressing to the Kosovar Albanians the need to protect the Serb minority, resolve the Mitrovica problem, and move forward on decentralization. The Kosovars need to earn their possible independence, Fried concluded.

¶13. (C) Pointing to the events of March 2004, Uzumcu stressed the need for NATO to maintain a strong presence in Kosovo and expressed concern about a possible transition from a NATO to an EU-led force. He stated that Turkey shared the U.S. view of the situation. "We can cope with the impact on the region," he asserted, adding that he saw no catastrophic situation resulting from Kosovo's independence. Fried assured Uzumcu that NATO would remain in Kosovo after final status.

¶14. (U) A/S Fried has cleared this cable.

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